

CORBETT & CO. INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION LAWYERS LTD

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. OUR COMMITMENT

General commitment

Corbett & Co. International Construction Lawyers Ltd (the Company) is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality and diversity in its own policies, practices and procedures and in those areas in which it has influence. The Company embraces diversity and encourages employees to share their views and lifestyles, thereby broadening everyone's awareness of differences. We believe in fostering an environment of inclusion that encourages partners and employees to be successful. By valuing our differences we build upon our individual, team and company strengths.

This policy applies to the Company's professional dealings with employees, directors, consultants, other solicitors, barristers, clients and third parties.

The Company intends to treat everyone equally and with the same attention, courtesy, fairness and respect regardless of age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background, family or care responsibilities, or part-time or fixed-term status.

The Company believes that we all have the right to work in an environment which promotes equality of opportunity and prohibits discriminatory practices. We do not tolerate any form of discrimination, victimisation or harassment by or against our people. The Company and its employees, directors and consultants should be fully aware of the behaviour that can constitute discrimination, victimisation and harassment. It is the responsibility of each of us to be sensitive towards the individual needs of all, whether they are related to any disability, cultural or religious background, personal circumstances, or any other relevant factor. The Company and its employees, directors and consultants must be conscious of the impact that they have on others and not discriminate against, harass or bully colleagues or condone discrimination, harassment or bullying by others. All employees, directors and consultants must behave in a way that supports this policy and treat each other with respect, courtesy and dignity.

The policy applies to arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment including promotion, training and any other employment related activities.

Regulation and Legislation

In implementing, managing and maintaining its Equality and Diversity policy the Company is committed to:

- complying with Principle 9 of the SRA Handbook 2011 which requires that we run the business in a way that encourages equality of opportunity and respect for diversity
- achieving the mandatory Outcomes in Chapter 2 of the Code of Conduct.
- compliance with all current and future anti-discrimination legislation and associated codes of practice, including but not limited to the Equality Act 2010.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to everyone working in the Company. It affects how we work with our clients and our suppliers of goods and services.

This policy covers the following matters:

- Discrimination, victimisation and harassment
- Recruitment, selection, training and development and promotion
- Terms and conditions of service/terms of engagement
- Procurement
- Policy Implementation and Complaints
- Monitoring and review

It accepts and reiterates our responsibilities under UK anti-discrimination and equality and diversity legislation, Human Rights Act 1998, the SRA handbook and the SRA Code of Conduct.

2. FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

The following are the kinds of discrimination which are against the Company's policy:

Direct discrimination – where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background, family or care responsibilities, or part-time or fixed-term status.

Associative discrimination – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with someone who possess one of the protected characteristics (age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual

orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background, family or care responsibilities, or part-time or fixed-term status)..

Discrimination by perception – direct discrimination against someone because others perceive they possess one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination - where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone would put people who share a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared with other persons, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

Victimisation - where someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has, in good faith made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under a relevant act or code of practice or because they are suspected of so doing.

Harassment – when unwanted conduct, related to any relevant protected characteristic takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment may involve, physical acts or verbal and non-verbal communications and gestures.

3. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

General Statement

As an employer the Company will treat all employees, directors, consultants, temporary or agency workers, trainees, work experience students, secondees as well as potential new employees and recruitment candidates equally and fairly and not discriminate against them. The Company is committed to creating a working environment which promotes inclusion and respects the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of all its directors, employees and consultants and which is free from discrimination and harassment. This will for example include arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotion, grievances and disciplinary processes, demotions, selection for redundancy, dress code, references, bonus schemes, work allocation and any other employment related activities.

Recruitment and Selection

The Company recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and encourages a working environment where everyone is valued for their skills and contribution. The Company will take steps as appropriate to ensure:

- It endeavours to select from the widest pool of qualified candidates possible.

- Employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit.
- Where appropriate positive action measures are taken to attract applications from all sections of society and especially from those groups which are under represented in the workforce.
- Selection criteria and process do not discriminate unjustifiably on the grounds of age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background, family or care responsibilities, or part-time or fixed-term status other than in those instances where the Company is exercising permitted positive action.

Terms and conditions of service

Terms and conditions of service for employees will comply with anti-discrimination and equality and diversity legislation, rules and codes of practice. The provision of benefits such as working hours, maternity and other leave arrangements, performance appraisal systems, dress code, bonus schemes and any other conditions of employment will not discriminate against any employee on the grounds of age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background, family or care responsibilities, or part-time or fixed-term status..

Where appropriate and necessary the Company will endeavour to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service which take into account the specific needs of employees which arise from their ethnic or cultural background, age, gender, responsibilities as carers, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

Promotion & Career Development

Promotion within the Company including to that of director will be based solely on merit and made in accordance with the principles of equality and diversity.

All employees will have equal access to training and other career development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities. However the Company will take positive action measures (as permitted by the anti discriminatory legislation, rules and codes of practice) to provide special training and support for groups which are under-represented in the workforce and encourage them to take up training and career development opportunities.

BARRISTERS AND THIRD PARTIES

Barristers

Barristers are instructed on the basis of their skills, experience and ability. The Company will not avoid briefing a barrister on the grounds of age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background or family or care responsibilities, part-time or fixed-term status and will not request a barrister's clerk to do so.

Suppliers

Where the company uses the services of agencies, contractors and other third parties they shall where appropriate be asked to comply with the company's policy on equality and diversity.

4. CLIENTS

The company is generally free to decide whether to accept instructions for any particular client but any refusal to act will not be based on age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background or family or care responsibilities, part-time or fixed-term status.

5. PROMOTING EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The Company is committed to promoting equality and diversity within the Company as well as in those areas in which it has influence.

Employees, directors and consultants have been informed of the Company's Equality and Diversity policy and will be provided with equality and diversity training appropriate to meet their needs and responsibilities.

All those who act on the Company's behalf will be informed of our Equality and Diversity policy and will be expected to pay due regard to it when conducting business on the Company's behalf.

In all dealings, including those with suppliers, contractors and recruitment agencies the Company will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity.

6. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

Shared responsibility

We will support and encourage our directors, employees and consultants in their responsibility to implement this policy by providing training, guidance and advice, where appropriate.

All employees, directors and consultants of the Company are required to comply with this policy in all of their dealings with clients, colleagues and anyone else with whom they come into contact during the course of their employment or engagement.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the policy is implemented. Acts of discrimination, victimisation or harassment are not tolerated and are treated very seriously and any breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence resulting, if appropriate, in disciplinary action.

The Company will take such steps and make such adjustments, as reasonable in all the circumstances in order to prevent any of its employees, partners, members, directors or clients who are disabled from being placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to those who are not disabled.

Consequences of discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Any behaviour involving discrimination, victimisation or harassment of another on the grounds of age, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion or religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity paternity, social or educational background or family or care responsibilities, part-time or fixed-term status will not be tolerated. Such behaviour may amount to gross misconduct in which case disciplinary action (including dismissal for serious offences) will be taken against any person breaching this policy.

Compliance

The principles of equality and diversity are central to our ethos. This policy will be readily accessible to all clients and third parties on request. The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. We are a member of The Law Society's Equality & Diversity Section.

Complaints of discrimination

Any employee who believes that discrimination is taking place should talk to their manager or a director in the first instance. The Company will treat seriously and will investigate all complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment on any of the grounds under this policy made by its employees, directors, consultants, clients, barristers or other third parties.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Company's grievance procedure and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

Any person raising a concern under this Policy whether informally or formally will be protected against any adverse treatment from colleagues. It is victimisation to penalise or retaliate against a person who brings complaints of discrimination or harassment in good faith, through any form of less favourable treatment. Any person who does victimise will be subject to disciplinary action, if appropriate and following an investigation. Anyone who considers that they have been victimised should raise this with their manager without delay in accordance with the Complaints Procedure. Managers and directors who observe harassment, discrimination or victimisation have a duty of care and responsibility to act and should:-

- talk to the individual to see if concerns arise;
- consider whether further informal or formal action is required.

7. MONITORING & REPORTING

The Company is committed to monitoring the effectiveness of this Equality and Diversity Policy and it will be reviewed annually by the Board to measure its progress and judge its effectiveness in relation to recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, learning & development opportunities, career development, promotion and grievance and discipline to ensure they comply with any legislative changes and good practice. The Company will endeavour to identify and take all steps necessary to eliminate any unjustified discrimination or victimisation which is revealed by this monitoring process and take the necessary action required to achieve our commitment to equality and diversity.

The Company will maintain records of the details, number and outcomes of any complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation made by employees, directors, consultants, barristers, clients, recruitment candidates or other third parties. The Company will maintain a record of any disciplinary action taken against employees, directors and consultants as a result of failure to comply with this policy.

Corbett & Co's Equality & Diversity Survey Data is available on request.

**Andrew Tweeddale is the director responsible for this policy.
Reviewed and updated 05.02.2014**